

DRAFT COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION

USE: Bicycling (cycling)

REFUGE NAME: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY: Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. §715d)

REFUGE PURPOSE: "...for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds." (16 U.S.C. §715d)

MISSION OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM:

To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans. (16 U.S.C. §3901(b))

DESCRIPTION OF USE

(a) What is the use? Refuge visitors travel the refuge road by bicycle. **Is the use a priority public use?** The specific activity of cycling is not a priority public use; however it has a wildlife –oriented component considering that visitors enjoy wildlife viewing and wild lands observation while riding their bikes on the Refuge road.

(b) Where would the use be conducted? Cycling takes place on 6.5 miles of the main Refuge road including both the paved and gravel portions.

(c) When would the use be conducted? The use is conducted year- round, however it is generally done during the warmer part of the year. (April – November)

(d) How would the use be conducted? This activity consists of visitors either arriving at the Refuge by bike and continuing to ride on the refuge or arriving with the bicycle transported by vehicle, parking at a parking lot (usually lot 1) and then riding the Refuge road by bike.

(e) Why is this use being proposed? Individuals use bicycles for either the sole purpose of riding for enjoyment and fitness; as a means of transportation from lot 1 to other areas; or concurrently, participating in wildlife observation as they travel the road.

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES: The Refuge has placed bike lock stations at several parking lots and maintains a 6.5 mile road. The northern half of the road is paved to the Hellcat area. South of Hellcat the road is gravel/stone dust and is only suitable for fat tire or mountain bikes. The Refuge maintains a reasonable 25 mph speed limit on the road. This activity is within the budget and staffing capabilities of the Refuge to manage.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS OF THE USE: Some disturbance of wildlife occurs as visitors travel the roadway. Level of impact is deemed to be minor. Majority of this activity/use is judged to be wildlife oriented as visitors enjoy wildlife observation along the way. User safety is a consideration particularly on the unpaved portion of the road because of the dust that is kicked up by passing vehicles which hampers visibility.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT:

This Compatibility Determination is provided for public comment for a 14-day period, from December 15 to 29, 2004. Availability of the draft CD is advertised through a legal notice in the local newspaper, press release, flyers at the Refuge entrance gate and other public areas, and through the Refuge's web site.

DETERMINATION (check one below):

_____ Use is Not Compatible

 X Use is Compatible with the Following Stipulations

STIPULATIONS NECESSARY TO ENSURE COMPATIBILITY:

- The level of use will be monitored to ensure any disturbance of wildlife is kept to a minimum. This also applies to visitor safety where large groups of cyclists could be considered unsafe on the Refuge road.
- Cyclists must comply with traffic regulations and common bicycle safety.
- State helmet use laws in effect on the Refuge.
- Bicycles are prohibited on trails and boardwalks.
- Sanctioned or unsanctioned bike races are not allowed.
- Off -road bicycle use is not allowed. Use is confined to the Refuge road and parking lots.

Signature – Refuge Manager: _____
(Signature and Date)

Concurrence – Regional Chief: _____
(Signature and Date)

Mandatory 10-year Reevaluation Date: _____Dec. 31, 2009_____